

**Stamford School Readiness Council Meeting**  
**Wednesday, April 11, 2012**  
**9:00 a.m.**  
**UConn Stamford, Room 1.06**

***Council Members Present:***

Burke, Jennienne Peoples	Care to Care (Family Centers)
Cook, Lucia	Literacy Volunteers– Stamford/Greenwich
Farrell, Anne	UConn Stamford
Feder, Karen	Abilis
Fico, Karen	Stamford Public Schools
Garcia, Maritza	Adult Learning Center
Hallsissey, Jennifer	United Way of Western CT
Morrow, Polly	Pitney Bowes/Parent Representative
Mullett, Alisha	SoundWaters
Reardon, Ellen	Stamford Museum and Nature Center
Rigano, Sue	Stamford Public Education Foundation
Sandahl, Margo	Stamford Public Schools School Readiness Program
Wenz, Karen	First Presbyterian Nursery School

***Advisors:***

Ahuja, Sonja	Discovery Community Liaison, Graustein Memorial Fund
Katz, Gerry	Grants Department, City of Stamford
Sargent, Carol	Childcare Learning Centers
Tarantino, Sherry	Sacred Heart School

**I. Welcome & Introductions**

Jennifer Hallsissey, one of the School Readiness Council's interim chairs, welcomed everyone and thanked Anne Farrell for arranging for UConn Stamford to host today's for meeting.

**II. Approval of Minutes from March 2012 Meeting**

The Council unanimously approved the minutes from the March meeting.

**III. Announcements**

Various Council members shared news of upcoming events. Details will be sent to the Council via e-mail.

#### **IV. New Business**

- Gerry Katz, the Grants Coordinator for the City of Stamford, joined the meeting today to report on the state of the School Readiness RFP process. Applications were made public in February and were due in early April. A small review committee is working to review the applications and provide feedback and all is on track. Applications will be submitted to the state on May 18.
- Sonja Ahuja, our liaison from the Graustein Memorial Fund, shared with the Council an interim feedback report on our Discovery Interim Report submitted in December. This is a new effort by the Graustein Fund to improve dialogue and collaboration with its Discovery partners. The report is included with the minutes as Addendum A.
- Graustein has released its 2012-14 applications and the Stamford Collaborative will again be applying for an Option 2a grant for \$25,000. This year, returning 2a communities are being asked to secure a \$10,000 match for this work. This can be pure dollars for work to be done or redeployed staff hours for special projects. The Executive Committee is working on a number of ideas and will report back next month. Applications are due April 25.
- Part of the application process if the Collaborative (aka Council) completing a Community Planning Assessment Tool. Sonja led the group in a lively and engaging conversation which resulted in the Council agreeing that a next action step would be to use the May and June meeting time to do some strategic planning around the Blueprint and the Collaborative's governance structure. The Executive Committee will meet in advance of the next meeting to plan an agenda for this discussion. The completed Community Planning Assessment Tool is included as Addendum B.

#### **V. Regular Reports**

- Reports from Sacred Heart and CLC were sent to the Council in advance of the meeting and are included here as Addendums to this report.
- The Health and Wellness Committee did not meet in April, but will be having a speaker on bullying at our May meeting.
- The Education Committee is moving forward with its professional development focus group study work. We ran our first focus groups last week for our professional development study. On Tuesday, we had an extraordinary group of family day care providers. Jennienne facilitated the session with support from Sonja. Anne Farrell ran a session on Wednesday night with a group of dedicated preschool teachers organized by Karen Wenz. Both groups were thoughtful and engaged in the discussion.
- On April 2, over 100 parents and 40 children attended our Kindergarten Information Night at the Ferguson Library. Michele did an amazing job presenting all the ins and outs of the Kindergarten registration process and explaining what to expect come the first day of school. We distributed our Play and Learn flyers for May 9 and 25 of the 50 spaces are already reserved. A mailing is going out shortly and we are confident the other spots will be filled. The June 5 evening will primarily be for the Head Start families at Maple Avenue, along with any people who we cannot accommodate on May 9.

## **VI. Old Business**

- Plans for the Early Childhood Fair are well underway and all the big details have been handled including our securing a donation of snack bars and water bottles from Fairway Market. Posters and flyers are available in both English and Spanish and we'd ask that all committee members commit to taking 5-10 posters to put up both in their schools/buildings and around town.

## **VII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.

**The next Council meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 9 at the Sacred Heart School.**

## **Addendum A: Discovery Interim Report Feedback**

### **2011 Interim Report community feedback**

<b>Community:</b>	STAMFORD
<b>Liaison:</b>	Sonja Ahuja

### **Strengths**

1. Council sees its role as the unified, single body stewarding the community interests for young children and families, and includes many key representatives.
2. Committees are in place with membership and are operating consistently.
3. The council and working committees are on track with timeline in the majority of areas.
4. Active and engaged health committees with members conducting intensive projects.

### **Areas that need attention:**

1. Leverage and build upon relationships to develop capacity for community decision making - Look at the role of the School Readiness Council in more fully defining and advancing a community agenda for young children and families.
2. Revisit the community plan to better connect the activities into strategic initiatives. Choose indicators that relate to the compelling community issues being addressed. Focus on impact and results.
3. Continue to work on plan elements including
  - Financing
  - Accountability
  - Data collection and analysis
4. Continue efforts to engage parents, as table appears to be very provider driven, perhaps connecting with PLTI to support this effort.

## Addendum B: Community Planning Assessment Tool

	Characteristics	CSA Rating	What actions will you take to address this area?	Who will be responsible?	What is the timeline for this/these actions to be completed?
Collaboration	Broad and Inclusive Collaborative	Rating: 4 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Becoming more representative; better reflect Stamford community <u>Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Flesh out next steps in the Blueprint</li><li>Review membership—use community engagement events and information/outreach efforts to recruit</li></ul>	Executive Committee and Council	Through next fiscal year
	Engaged Collaborative Group	Rating: 4 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Leadership transitions/succession and staffing <u>Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Plan for leadership transition and sustainable staffing</li><li>Develop written agreements among partners, regarding resources—in-kind and financial commitments</li></ul>	Staff and Council leadership—work with City	Through next fiscal year—September to begin agreements
	Strategic Use of Data	Rating: 2 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Lack of infrastructure or system for data collection; need to distinguish activity/program measures from outcome/results <u>Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop list of data points; define data needs</li><li>Secure resources/engage researcher—intern or fellowship</li><li>Regularly devote a portion of meeting time to data sharing and discussion</li></ul>	Working committee to design data plan—staff support	January ready to recruit intern/fellow researcher
	Governance Structure with Working Committees	Rating: 3 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Developing new leaders; orienting new members; parent committee weakly connected to Council <u>Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Orientation plan/process</li><li>Succession plan</li><li>Meeting schedule adjustments</li><li>Governance processes and procedures documented</li></ul>	Executive Committee—orientation and reporting; members lists; priorities/focus	Establish calendar for 2012-13; September to implement new schedule (adjust meeting time to accommodate varied schedules)

<b>Parent Engagement</b>	Parent Leadership & Engagement	Rating: 2 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Comprehensive approaches to parent engagement <u>Action:</u> Review “honeycomb”—parent voice and action guide; consider funding a stipend for parent participation; actively connect with PLTI grads/alumni	Liaison (Sonja Ahuja) for PVA	Starting in May 2012

	Characteristics	CSA Rating	How do you propose to address this area?	Who will be responsible?	What is the timeline for this/these actions to be completed?
<b>Local Leadership</b>	Support of Mayor/Chief Elected Official (CEO)	Rating: 2 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Meets at request <u>Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continuing to communicate regularly</li> <li>Ensure new staff connects</li> </ul>	Transition committee/working group to support new chair	Plan is emerging now
	Support of Superintendent	Rating: 1 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Representative assigned, Michele Sabia, very effective <u>Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite leaders to attend SRC meeting—invite parents</li> <li>Recruit Asst. Supt to attend regularly</li> </ul>	Executive Committee	Plan is emerging now
	Strong Collaborative Leadership (CHAIR)	Rating: 1 or 4 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Current chair is City staff assigned by Mayor <u>Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Manage through the transition to new staff; maintain city engagement</li> <li>Create co-chair position</li> </ul>	Mayor, with Executive Committee support	Plan is emerging now
	Community Champion/Spokesperson	Rating: 1 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Communication plan lacking <u>Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add role to Council leadership job descriptions</li> <li>Recruit additional spokespersons</li> <li>Create communication plan</li> </ul>	Chair of Collaborative	When new Chair is in place
	Engaged Collaborative Sponsor	Rating: 4 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> <u>Action:</u>		

	Strong and Skilled Facilitator (Coordinator)	Rating: 4 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> <u>Action:</u>		
Staff Support	Meaningful Local Match	Rating: 3 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> Resource planning <u>Action:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document grants and funding plus in-kind that supports the work—more complete picture of resources allocated to early childhood education—e.g., UConn support for focus group study</li> </ul>		
Meaningful Local Match	Meaningful Local Match	Rating: 3 Relevant: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<u>List all areas to be addressed:</u> <u>Action:</u>		

## **Addendum C: Sacred Heart Report, March 2012**

### **Program Utilization:**

- School Day – School Year – 50 Students
- Pre – K 3 Class – 18
- Pre – K 4 Class #1-16
- Pre – K 4 Class #2-16
- All 20 School Readiness slots are full.

### **Program Attendance:**

- Children – 98% Colds, coughs, allergies
- Staff – 98% Colds

### **Staffing:**

- No changes during the month of March 2012.

### **Activities & Events:**

- We held our annual Dr. Seuss Day on 3/2! We would like to thank the many parents that have sent in Dr. Seuss books to share and read with their classmates. The teachers read many of the Dr. Seuss classic stories in their classrooms.
- The Scholastic Book Fair was a success!! Our profit came by selecting books amounting to \$328.30 in Scholastic \$\$\$. Each year we continue to build our school library!!
- Our school Photo Day on 3/22 went off without a problem!! The photographer was able to win over every child and get them to smile and pose for their photos! We should have delivery of all photos on or around April 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Our staff members had Staff Development & Training on 3/23, on the State of CT mandated Lesson Plans which are now called (LEP's) Learning Experience Plans. The SHS staff devised a new format for the LEP's to help make the planning much less time consuming.
- Sacred Heart School has completed Emergency Preparedness & Disaster Planning for Child Care Centers at Norwalk Community College.



## **Addendum D: Childcare Learning Centers Report, March 2012**

- Program Utilization
  - a. Authorized Capacity – Full Day – 334; Part Day – 97; Extended Day – 113 = 544
  - b. Ages: 3 year olds – 110; 4 year olds – 335; 5 year olds - 99
  - c. Children with disabilities = 19 with IEP  
2 without IEP
  - d. Notes and Trends: N/A
- Program Attendance:
  - a. 99% Attendance.
  - b. Notes and trends: - none
- Staffing
  - a. Open Positions – 1Teacher- Cluster B
  - b. Recruitment – ad on-line, local newspapers, postings at NCC
  - c. Training:
    - Bi-weekly meetings occurring on NAEYC Standards – March 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>.
    - Instructional Coordinators meet weekly with each classroom to review Learning Experience Plans
    - March 16<sup>th</sup> – Staff Development Day – Classroom Portfolios, Diversity Luncheon-Sharing Cultures, Julie Coakley Presented- Observation/Assessment
- Special Events/Activities:
  - Teachers are preparing lesson plans based on the Preschool Curriculum Standards and the individual needs of the children.
  - Pitney Bowes volunteers came to distribute the materials they purchased to assist in meeting the NAEYC criteria on March 27<sup>th</sup>. Pitney Bowes purchased Life Cycle Kits, multicultural dolls, multicultural dress up clothes, and career puzzles for each classroom. Nine volunteers came to distribute and read to the children.
  - Cluster A celebrated Career Week with Dentist, Nurse and Chef visits and Yoga on March 13th
  - Parent Advisory Committee meeting occurred on March 20th.
  - Student Support Team is meeting bi-weekly to discuss any children with concerns.
  - “Read Across America” was celebrated February 27-March 2<sup>nd</sup>- Focused on Dr. Seuss books with many fun activities all week, including a special Green Egg snack
  - Cat in the Hat came to visit on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. All children were able to enjoy a special reading of “Cat in the Hat” by Dr. Seuss.
  - Mobile Dental Unit was at William Pitt on March 5th, 6th, and 7<sup>th</sup>.
  - Director, Instructional Coordinators and Cluster Manager were able to go to the Ferguson Library and view recommended children’s books. We have received a grant from William Pitt Foundation for new books for the children.

- Farmer's Market occurred March 14<sup>th</sup>- Parents and staff were invited to pick out two fruit/vegetables for free. They were asked to complete a survey explaining how they prepared the items and anyone who completed the survey will be invited to come back next month for additional fruit/vegetables.
- Lunch and Learn – “Positive Parenting-Identifying Your Parenting Style”- presented by Olympia Arnold – March 8th
- Cluster B – field trip to Stamford High Preschool Lab-March 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Cluster C – field trip to Stamford High Preschool Lab – March 20<sup>th</sup>.
- All Clusters have been taking the Kindergarten bound children on the Ferguson Libraries “Purple Bus” trips throughout the month.
- Notes and trends- N/A